

Description of the work	Length in km	Present position of the work
Madurai-Bodinayakanur	90	Survey is in progress. Further consideration of the project would be possible once the survey report becomes available.

III. Section in which there is no proposal for gauge conversion at present.

Description of the work	Length in km
Mayiladuthurai-Karaikkudi	187
Manamadurai-Virudhunagar	67
Mettupalayam-Uthagamandalam	46
Tiruturaipundi-Agasthiyamalli-Kodaikkarai	46

(c) and (d) No Targets have yet been fixed for above gauge conversion projects. The work will be progressed as per availability of resources in the coming years.

Unmanned Railway Crossings in Rajasthan

†2917. SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

- (a) the number of unmanned Railway crossings in Rajasthan; and
- (b) the steps proposed to be taken to avoid accidents at these crossings?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) There are 2223 unmanned level crossings in Rajasthan.

(b) The following steps have been taken to prevent accidents at unmanned level crossings.

1. Proper Road Signs have been provided on the approaches to level crossings so that the road vehicle drivers are made aware of the existence of a level crossing.
2. Speed breakers/rumble strips have been provided on the approaches

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

to level crossing gates so that the road vehicle drivers are reminded to reduce their speed.

3. Whistle Board are also provided alongside the rail track on approach to level crossings. The train drivers are required to whistle right from the whistle board till such time the train crosses the level crossing gate in order to warn the road users about the approaching train. Periodic drives are launched for checking whether the drivers are whistling from such Whistle Boards.
4. To educate the road drivers about safety at unmanned level crossings, publicity campaign is launched through various media like quickies on TV, cinema slides, posters, talks on radio, newspaper advertisements and street plays.
5. Since accidents at unmanned level crossings take place due to negligence of road users, the State Governments can help by exercising strict checks while issuing driving licences. specially to drivers of trucks, buses and other heavy vehicles. All Chief Secretaries have been requested to co-operate in educating the road users.
6. Road users have still not got used to the faster speeds of Mail/ Express trains. A train travelling at 90 KMPH covers 25 metres per second. Thus, although to the road users, the train appears to be 200 metres away, in terms of time it is only 8 seconds away. This message is being conveyed to them progressively by various publicity measures.
7. Joint Ambush Checks with civil authorities to nab errant road vehicle drivers under the provisions of the Motor Vehicles Act. 1988 and the Railways Act. 1989 are being intensified.
8. Village panchayats are involved in their public awareness programmes.
9. The Safety posters are being put up at level crossing and Village Panchayat Offices progressively.
10. The Safety posters are being put up progressively at retail fuel pumps.

11. The level crossing gates are progressively being manned in a phased manner.

Increase in Passenger Traffic in Metro Routes

2918. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the steps Railways are contemplating to meet the increasing demand of passenger traffic on routes connecting four metropolitan cities of Mumbai, Delhi, Calcutta and Chennai; and

(b) by when the confirmed reservation on the day of journey on trains to above cities will be available?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH): (a) Railways take various steps like introduction of new trains between metros, increasing the frequencies of the trains and augmentation of the trains. This is a continuous exercise subject to availability of resources, operational feasibility and commercial viability. During 2000-2001, the following additional services between the metropolitan cities are being provided:—

1. 2313/2314 Sealdah-New Delhi Rajdhani between Calcutta and New Delhi introduced w.e.f. 1.7.2000.
2. Increase in frequency of 2951/2952 New Delhi- Mumbai Rajdhani Express from 6 days a week to daily.
3. Increase in frequency of 2953/2954 New Delhi- Mumbai August Kranti Rajdhani Express from 6 days a week to daily.

Since availability of path is a major constraint for introduction of new trains, Railways are augmenting the loads of trains to 24 coaches to the extent feasible and justified. The following trains have been augmented to 24 coaches between the metros:—

1. 2615 / 2616 N. Delhi-Chennai GT Express w.e. f 5.5.1999.
2. 2612 / 2622 New Delhi-Chennai Tamilnadu Express w.e.f 5.5.1999.
3. 2471 / 2472 Jammu Mumbai Express w.e.f. 16.6.2000.

However, during the summer vacations / Pujas special trains are run to clear the extra rush.